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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*The Riverside History of the United States.* WILLIAM E. DODD, Editor.  
I, *Beginnings of the American People.* By CARL L. BECKER. Pp. 346.  
II, *Union and Democracy.* By ALLEN JOHNSON. Pp. 279.  
III, *Expansion and Conflict.* By WILLIAM E. DODD. Pp. 329.  
IV, *The New Nation.* By FREDERICK L. POXSON. Pp. 342.  
New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$1.25 each.

It is now a quarter of a century since the publication of the three-volume work, *Epochs of American History*, edited by Professor A. B. Hart. A detailed comparison between that work and the present set of four volumes, edited by Professor Dodd, would reveal the progress that historical investigation has made in this field during the intervening years. It is needless to say that the *Riverside History*, written by historians of the younger group, who are men of acknowledged scholarship, embodies the results of this progress.

The volumes, of convenient octavo size, are intended for advanced college classes and for general reading by business and professional men; and they are admirably suited for both purposes. Many teachers, however, would wish to see marginal notes or sectional headings in the chapters. They might also wish for a different kind of bibliography at the ends of chapters; the brief lists of books given are not especially serviceable either to teachers, to whom the books are well known, or to students, who desire more specific references. Moreover, teachers would be pleased, and students would be benefited, if in certain places the outline of fundamentals in the story of events stood out more plainly, even at the expense of style. For example, in the chapter on the making of the Constitution (Vol. II, chap. ii), the date of the Alexandria meeting is stated as 1784 (instead of 1785) but it is not distinctly stated that the Annapolis convention met in 1786; that nine ratifications were secured in 1788; or that the Constitution went into effect in 1789. Students will be interested in the progress of the story, but their study of this and other topics will not leave a clear impression of such essentials. A similar looseness in the statement of dates is seen in the next chapter in connection with the admission of states (Vol. II, p. 55).

Professor Becker's volume stands out among the four in respect to style as Woodrow Wilson's does in the *Epochs Series*. Everywhere, however, there is vigor of expression, and the interest is sustained.

The most noticeable single feature of the set is the large number of maps and graphs illustrating both the political and the economic phases of our history. There are 31, 25, and 11 maps and charts in Vols. II, III, and IV

respectively. Several of these embody data that have not hitherto been displayed in this form. There are maps showing results of elections, agricultural products, internal improvements, railroads, population, public domain, distribution of industries, etc. The emphasis upon economic history and the concreteness of its presentation mark the new era upon which the writing of our history has entered.

This set will be serviceable, not only as a college text, but as a work of reference for public and high-school libraries.

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*An Elementary French Grammar.* By E. W. OLMSTED. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1915. Pp. xii+338.

The forty-three lessons contained in this book present an unusually complete résumé of the leading facts of French grammar needed by beginners. The rules are for the most part clearly and crisply set forth, as a reader may easily verify by turning to the treatment of adjective position in Lesson XVII, of interrogative pronouns in XXIX, of *ce* v. *il* in XXVIII, of prepositions in XXXVI, of the subjunctive in XXXIX. Furthermore, teachers will be pleased to find that the author succeeds quite unobtrusively in acquainting the beginner with numerous niceties of grammar and idiom usually untouched in such a treatise, and, since most students do no formal grammar after their introductory book, this fact has its importance.

The book is provided with much phonetic apparatus,<sup>1</sup> with grammatical questionnaires for use in direct-method classes, and, in about half the lessons, with really interesting exercise material bearing on France and French life. In the chapter on pronunciation are to be noted the presence of the usual comparisons between French and English sounds, with no more than the usual success, and the absence of a simple description of the formation of French sounds from the standpoint of practical phonetics. To get this the teacher would almost sacrifice the useful and thorough treatment of the individual letters on pp. 5-10. The questionnaires furnish an excellent basis for review, but will the direct-method enthusiast put into the hands of his pupils a textbook written in English?

<sup>1</sup> The author's adoption of Passy's pronunciation as given in the *International Dictionary* leads him in his vocabulary to transcribe an open *e* in the penultimate of words like *espérer*, *répéter*, and in the initial of *sérieux*, *féroce*, *Pléiade*; to transcribe *fosse* with an open *o*, and *alone* with a close *o*; to pronounce *Montaigne* like *montagne* (cf. Stapfer, quoted in Nyrop's *Manuel phonétique*, p. 154), and *mars* with the same vowel as *âme*. There are a few misprints in the transcriptions: *aurai* with open *e* (p. 15), omission of nasal symbol on *montrer* (p. 243) and on *distinct* (p. 258), close vowel in *je* (p. 268). The transcription for *malière* is missing.